

Dear Chairman  
Martin:

It is time for the  
FCC to step to its  
obligation to  
protect the citizens  
from mergers that  
reduce competition  
therefore limiting  
choices. A diverse  
free media is  
necessary for our  
country to survive.  
Limiting media  
content to only a  
few major players  
will destroy a  
democracy fast. Just  
look back to Nazi  
Germany.

I am writing to  
challenge the  
Comcast/Time  
Warner/Adelphia  
merger (FCC Docket  
No. 05-192) and the  
AT&T/BellSouth  
merger (FCC Docket  
No. 06-74). Allowing  
the largest  
telecommunications  
company and the two  
largest cable  
companies and in the  
United States to  
grow even larger  
does not serve the

public interest.

The concentration of media power is a growing problem in this country. Though we have more channels available than ever before, they are increasingly falling under the control of a handful of giant corporations. The cost of broadband service also remains out of reach for many households. Americans are hungry for more competition in services. However, these mergers will only starve Americans of this needed competition.

Allowing AT&T to combine with BellSouth will give the top three broadband providers control of over half of all broadband connections in the country. At the same time, the Time Warner/Comcast/Adelphia merger will give

Comcast and Time Warner increased power over entire regions of the United States, allowing rates to rise even as the digital divide continues to grow.

The FCC should block these transactions or impose strict conditions to protect free speech and competition under its "public interest standard." If the FCC decides to allow either of these mergers, it should require the following conditions:

1. Subscribers must be able to choose from competitive Internet Service Providers ("open access"). The FCC should also ensure that these companies cannot discriminate against any Internet content or rival service and that every service will be treated exactly

the same ("Network Neutrality").

2. Companies must be required to sell broadband access separate from video and telephone service, and at the same price ("naked broadband" or "unbundling").

3. Any subscriber must be able to connect any device to the network (such as a Wi-Fi router) that does not harm the network.

4. Take steps to protect public access programming ("PEG"). Cable companies have become less responsive to the needs and requirements of communities. The quality of public accountability in local franchise agreements has declined, as big companies leverage their power to squeeze local

governments.

Likewise,  
telecommunications  
giants — like AT&T —  
are trying to  
eliminate the  
remaining vestiges  
of effective local  
oversight and  
control altogether.

5. Independent  
programmers must be  
able to reach  
subscribers. We are  
required to buy  
channels we don't  
want or need because  
providers of video  
service bundle them  
together.

6. Any company that  
owns both  
programming and  
video systems should  
be required to  
provide competitors  
with access to their  
regional sports and  
other programming  
needed to offer  
competing services,  
so consumers will  
still have real  
choices.

In conclusion, I ask  
the FCC to consider

the interests of the people like me who pay the cable, telephone and broadband bills and watch the programming. Many of us already have enough trouble trying to afford broadband or cable TV. Please don't make it even harder for us to find competitors, or make it easier for Comcast, Time Warner and AT&T to raise prices or block local and independent voices.